

Proc. 8620

Title 3—The President

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8620 of December 21, 2010

National Stalking Awareness Month, 2011

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Stalking is a serious and pervasive crime that affects millions of Americans each year in communities throughout our country. Though we have gained a better understanding of stalking and its prevalence since the passage of the Violence Against Women Act in 1994, this dangerous and criminal behavior is still often mischaracterized as harmless. During Stalking Awareness Month, we acknowledge the seriousness of stalking, we recognize its impact on victims, and we recommit to reducing its incidence.

Persistent stalking and harassment can lead to serious consequences for victims, whose lives may be upended by fear. Some victims may be forced to take extreme measures to protect themselves, such as changing jobs, relocating to a new home, or even assuming a new identity. Stalking can happen to anyone, and most victims are stalked by someone they know. Young adults are particularly vulnerable, and women are at greater risk for stalking victimization than men.

Stalking can be a difficult crime to recognize. The majority of survivors do not report stalking victimization to the police, in part because perpetrators use a variety of tactics to intimidate and harass their victims. Increasingly, stalkers use modern technology to monitor and torment their victims, and one in four victims report some form of cyberstalking—such as threatening emails or instant messaging—as part of their harassment.

My Administration is working across the Federal Government to protect victims of violence and enable survivors to break the cycle of abuse or harassment. Stalking affects too many Americans to remain a hidden crime, and a strong stand is required in order to both support victims and hold perpetrators accountable.

As a Nation, we have made progress, but much work remains to respond to this criminal behavior. We must work together to educate the public about the potentially deadly nature of stalking, to encourage victims to seek help, to inform criminal justice professionals about the intersection of stalking and other dangerous crimes, and to support law enforcement in their efforts.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 2011 as National Stalking Awareness Month. I call on all Americans to learn to recognize the signs of stalking, acknowledge stalking as a serious crime, and urge those impacted not to be afraid to speak out or ask for help. Let us also resolve

to support victims and survivors, and to create communities that are secure and supportive for all Americans.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8621 of December 22, 2010

**National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month,
2011**

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Our Nation was founded on the enduring principles of equality and freedom for all. As Americans, it is our solemn responsibility to honor and uphold this legacy. Yet, around the world and even within the United States, victims of modern slavery are deprived of the most basic right of freedom. During National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, we rededicate ourselves to preventing and ending human trafficking, and we recognize all who continue to fight this serious human rights violation.

Human trafficking is a global travesty that takes many forms. Whether forced labor or sexual trafficking, child soldiering or involuntary domestic servitude, these abuses are an affront to our national conscience, and to our values as Americans and human beings. There is no one type of victim—men and women, adults and children are all vulnerable. From every corner of our Nation to every part of the globe, we must stand firm in defense of freedom and bear witness for those exploited by modern slavery.

At the start of each year, Americans commemorate the Emancipation Proclamation, which became effective on January 1, 1863, and the 13th Amendment, which was signed by President Abraham Lincoln and sent to the States for ratification on February 1, 1865. These seminal documents secured the promise of freedom for millions enslaved within our borders, and brought us closer to perfecting our Union. We also recall that, over 10 years ago, the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 renewed America's commitment to combating modern slavery domestically and internationally. With this law, America reaffirmed the fundamental promise of "forever free" enshrined within the Emancipation Proclamation.

We cannot strengthen global efforts to end modern slavery without first accepting the responsibility to prevent, identify, and aggressively combat this crime at home. No country can claim immunity from the scourge of human rights abuses, or from the responsibility to confront them. As evidence of our dedication to a universal struggle against this heinous practice, the Department of State's "Trafficking in Persons Report 2010" included America in its rankings for the first time, measuring our efforts by the same standards to which we hold other nations. Looking ahead, we must continue to aggressively investigate and prosecute human trafficking cases within our own borders.